



Jeb Bush
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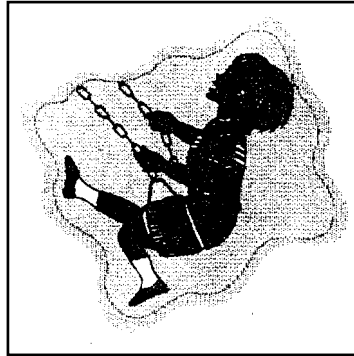
Robert G. Brooks, M. D.
Secretary

Child Care Licensing Procedural Guide

Department of Health

Leon County

State of Florida



CHILD CARE CENTER
INFORMATION FACTS
LEON COUNTY HEALTH
DEPARTMENT

1997

(850) 487 - 3166

Child Care Facility Inquiry Information Facts

Thank you for your inquiry regarding opening a child care facility.

"Child Care Facility," as defined in the Florida Statutes, includes any child care facility or arrangement which provides child care for more than five (5) children unrelated to the operator and which receives a payment, fee, or grant for any of the children receiving care, where ever operated and whether or not operated for profit.

You should be aware that in addition to the State laws affecting child care facilities, there are local ordinances, such as building codes, which govern the operation of a child care facility. Each child care facility must meet fire and life safety standards, and be subject to an annual fire inspection. Also, environmental health standards must be met and are subjected to periodic inspections.

After reading the attached information, if you are seriously planning to proceed with opening a child care facility, please complete the "Intent to Apply" form attached and return to:

**Leon County Health Department
P. O. Box 3825
Tallahassee, Florida 32315
3401 West Tharpe Street (do not mail to the street address)**

After reading the attached material, should you have further questions, please contact our office at 487-3166. We look forward to assisting you.

PURPOSE OF FACT SHEET

The purpose of this information sheet is to broadly summarize child care standards and provide useful information for those who may be contemplating establishing a child care facility. It is strongly recommended that no commitments toward any property be made until careful consideration of all structural requirements and child care regulations are scrutinized. This document addresses state standards only. You must also meet any city or county standards required for the operation of a child care facility. It is the applicant's responsibility to find out what those requirements might be.

A child care facility is considered a business and the structure must meet commercial standards. The building must meet certain fire requirements, the wiring must be in conduit, and the plumbing must meet state and county codes. Child Care facilities should have a great deal of open space to accommodate strict child/staff ratios. It is for these reasons that most single family dwellings do not convert well into child care facilities.

When evaluating a structure for a potential child care facility, many factors must be taken into consideration. Some of these considerations involve fire safety requirements, which must meet Chapter 4A-36, Uniform Fire Safety Rules and Standards of the State Fire Marshal's office, and all local, county or city requirements.

The following summarizes some of the basic fire safety requirements which are necessary. This is why it is important that you contact a Fire Safety Consultant prior to making a financial commitment for any structure. (The local Fire Department will not make these preliminary inspections. Utilize the yellow pages.)

Some of the things they may look at are:

- The wiring and type of walls within the building.
- The building exits and windows. Sliding glass doors may not be acceptable as exits.
- The type of existing fire alarm system.
- Installation and location of smoke detectors which are hooked into the fire alarm system.
A sprinkler system may be required. Fire extinguishers are always required.
- Facilities which desire a child care facility to be located on the second floor, or adjacent to another business or living quarters, need to meet additional requirements. Emergency lights and lighted exit signs may be required.
working telephone is required which is neither locked, nor a pay station.
- A monthly check of your emergency lights must be done.

REMEMBER, THESE ARE JUST SOME OF THE FIRE SAFETY ISSUES THAT MAY BE REQUIRED.

PHYSICAL FACILITY

If you are building a child care facility, find out what the building code requirements are for your area. Call your city or county building department.

- The building must have one toilet and one sink for the first fifteen (15) children and one toilet/sink combination for every 30 children, or portion of 30, thereafter. These facilities must be appropriate for the ages of the children being served, and at least one must be capable of serving physically handicapped children. The toilets may not open directly into an area where food is prepared.
- At least one (1) portable or permanent bath facility shall be available for bathing children. A hand washing sink is required in all rooms where infants are in care. A diaper changing surface is required to change all children in diapers and must have a clean non-permeable surface.
- A utility or mop sink must be available.
- A working phone with emergency numbers posted.
- The capacity of the facility is based on the area available to the children and is determined by measuring the various rooms, wall to wall, and computing their square footage. Only the usable floor space for the children is considered, which excludes hallways, closets, bathrooms, built-in furniture, the kitchen and office areas, etc.(35 sq. ft. per child).
- If building a new facility, the sewage disposal for the facility must be considered. If public sewage is available and an establishment is to be built, a sewer tap is required. If the building will have to be on a septic tank, an application for an on-site sewage disposal system is required (site evaluation). If the building is an existing one, an application for an existing system is required to evaluate the system to make sure it is adequate. The process may be complex, and will vary, depending on whether the facility will be located in the city or county.
- Another consideration for a prospective child care facility is whether the facility will provide meals. If **NO COOKING** will be done at the facility, a refrigerator, supplied with a thermometer, is recommended for storing the lunches properly. Single use service items are also recommended. Sufficient seating and appropriate size chairs for children at tables is required so that children may sit while eating. Adult chairs for children are not appropriate and may result in injury to a child.
- If the facility **WILL BE PREPARING** any meals, the kitchen is considered a food service establishment and must meet chapter **10D-13, Florida** Administrative Code, requirements, Equipment for kitchen must be indicated on the floor plans submitted to Environmental Health.

Some of the other types of requirements to be considered when choosing a building and/or drawing plans are:

1. An isolation area must be designated for any child who may become ill at the facility and must be equipped with a bed or cot which can be sanitized and the linens changed. The child must not be left alone and must be monitored for worsening conditions.
2. Where infants are in care, there must be enough space to allow for play area outside of the cribs. Children up to one year of age must have a separate crib. All cribs must meet federal regulations.
3. An outside play area must be provided with a minimum four foot (4') fence and must have at least forty five (45) square feet per child for 1/2 the maximum of the capacity of the facility, excluding children under 12 months of age in the calculation. The most preferable outdoor play area would be grass or a variety of resilient coverings. Asphalt and gravel playgrounds are considered less desirable and are not recommended. Shade must be available.
4. ALL WATER HAZARDS: POOLS, HOLDING PONDS, DITCHES, CREEKS, ETC., MUST BE FENCED. All equipment must be constructed to allow for drainage.
5. Furnishings and play equipment must be appropriate for the ages served. Toys must be clean. The facility must provide bedding, such as cots, or mats at least 1" thick with a cover of impervious material.
6. The building must be configured/constructed in such a manner as to provide adequate heating and cooling system.

PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS

The applicant for the license must submit the necessary documents to the Leon County Health Department, Child Care Licensing Unit, for completion of their background screening requirements.

This screening includes:

- Fingerprinting (through FDLE/FBI)
- Local Criminal History Check (through the local Sheriffs Department)
- A notarized Affidavit of Good Moral Character
- Previous Employment History.
- NOTE: There are fees for background screening (see fee schedule attached).
- Owner/Operators are responsible for conducting required screening on all employees.

Other personnel requirements are:
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1. There must be at least one staff person on the premises at all times who has First Aid training and Infant/Pediatric CPR training.
2. There shall be one person with a Child Development Associate Credential, or equivalent, for every 20 children, or fraction of 20 thereafter.
3. All staff must complete 30 hours of required training.
4. Eight (8) hours of in-service training is required for all staff on a yearly basis using July 1 through June 30 as the fiscal year.
5. Minimum age of 21 for owner/operator and age 16 for other employee that is to be counted in child/staff ratio.
6. Documentation of TB test with negative results for all personnel within 10 days of employment, health assessment within 30 days of employment.
7. Signed statement by all employees recognizing their responsibilities regarding child abuse and neglect.
8. Qualified, screened, substitutes available.

RECORD KEEPING

All staff records and children's records are required to be kept at the child care facility. They are to be available at all times to licensure personnel. (Licensure personnel includes all staff who are monitoring for facility compliance of licensure, environmental health and nursing, nutrition, and fire safety requirements.)

These records include:

1. Children's completed enrollment forms and health forms, including immunization. (TB results are required for children over 1 year old.)
2. Personnel files for all staff, including volunteers and substitutes.
3. Authorization forms to administer medication.
4. Reports of accidents and unusual incidents.
5. Monthly fire drill logs.
6. Daily schedule of activities posted.
7. Signed statement by parent of each child for receipt of child care facility brochure.
8. Written policies regarding discipline of children and a signed statement by parent of each child for receipt of a copy of policy.
9. Current attendance log. (This log must be current at any time of the day.)
10. Menus posted.

YOU SHOULD ANTICIPATE START-UP COSTS

You should consider all the financial aspects of starting your own business when you are starting a new facility or buying one that already exists.

Some costs might include:

- Land/property taxes
- Utility connection charges
- Construction or renovation costs
- Professional fees
- Classroom equipment
- Screening and application fees
- Kitchen equipment
- Marketing/advertising
- Office equipment
- Insurance
- Maintenance equipment
- Staff training and orientation
- Van or other transportation
- Playground equipment

THEN YOU MUST CONSIDER YOUR ON-GOING BUDGET
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Items to include:

- Rent/mortgage
- Utilities
- Educational consumable supplies
- Food
- Insurance
- Office and administrative supplies
- Taxes
- Repairs/renovations
- Equipment additions/replacement
- Payroll expenses- include salaries, worker's compensation, insurance, federal withholding taxes, FICA, and unemployment insurance.

Many child care centers go out of business because of operational cost, under-estimation or poor money planning, and poor management.

CHECKLIST OF <i>STEPS FOR</i> CHILD CARE LICENSURE
____ (1). Select a location
____ (2). Contact your zoning office to ensure proper zoning approval.
____ (3). Request a fire safety consultation (yellow pages) for an evaluation of your prospective building. Discuss fire safety codes for a child care facility.
____ (4). Contact your county or city building department for cost of any renovation permits.
____ (5). Contact ADA for specifications if you plan to serve children with disabilities.
____ (6). Complete the Intent to Apply form and forward to Child Care Licensing. You will be provided an application and receive technical assistance to guide you through the licensing process. (You may opt to write a letter of intent (see sample letter) rather than complete the Intent to Apply form.
____ (7). Submit floor plan of facility, drawn to scale, showing dimensions of each room, where each sink and toilet is located, labeled rooms (kitchen, classroom, storage, isolation area, etc).
____ (8). Complete and submit Application for Licensure (include appropriate fees), notarized Affidavit of Compliance.
____ (9). Submit Articles of Incorporation listing all members if facility owned by corporation.
____ (I 0). Submit verification of sewage (city or septic), water (city or well) and utilities.
____ (I 1). Submit Certificate of Occupancy from building department.
____ (12). Submit discipline plan incorporating statutory language.
____ (I 3). Submit Schedule of daily activities for each age group.
____ (I 1). Submit background screening for owner/operator with fees attached.
____ (14). Submit verification of results of TB test on owner/operator.
____ (I 5). Submit verification of completion of First Aid and Infant/Pediatric CPR.
____ (I 6). Submit verification of van capacity, physical on driver of van, single liability insurance on van and inspection of van by mechanic.

AT THIS POINT, YOU MAY WISH TO RE-READ THE CHILD CARE FACILITY FACT SHEET.

Once you have reviewed all of these materials and you wish to proceed, a counselor will assist you in obtaining a license. There are many other requirements you will need to know and things to be accomplished before obtaining a license. Owning and operating a child care facility can be very exciting, but challenging. There is much more to it than just wanting to care for children.

GOOD LUCK!!!!

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

Please complete the following information regarding your proposed child care center.

1.) TRANSPORTATION SERVICES:

_____ The facility does NOT plan to provide transportation service.

_____ The facility DOES plan to provide transportation service.

(Please check all that apply)

_____ Before/After school pick-up

_____ Field Trips

List all vehicles to be used for before/after school pick up and/or field trips.

Owner's name

Model/Year

List Driver and credentials (CDL, if appropriate)

Driver's Full Name (driver must have annual physical and current Florida Driver's license)

2.) FOOD PREPARATION (Check all that apply)

_____ We will offer, prepare, and serve meals.

_____ We will have children bring their own lunch.

_____ We will prepare snacks.

_____ We will provide single service snacks only.

3.) FIELD TRIPS (Please Circle one)

Field trips (will/will not) be offered by this facility.

EMPLOYMENT HISTORY

Please complete the following information with regard to previous employment. (past two years)

Use additional sheets if necessary.

Name of Employer	Dates of Employment		
Address of Employer	City	State	Zip Code
Your Position			
Supervisor's Name		Phone number	

Name of Employer	Dates of Employment		
Address of Employer	City	State	Zip Code
Your position			
Supervisor's Name		Phone number	

Name of Employer	Dates of Employment		
Address of Employer	City	State	Zip Code
Your Position			
Supervisor's name		Phone number	

Intent to Apply

for A License to Operate A Child Care Facility

If you have reviewed the enclosed materials and are interested in pursuing a child care facility license, please complete this form and return to the licensing office. We will assist you through the licensing process.

I. Identifying Data

Name of Applicant:
Address:
Telephone:

II: ☐ **New Child Care Facility OR** ☐ **Change of Ownership** (Check one)

Name of Child Care Facility

Facility Street Address

City

County

State

Zip Code

II. LEGAL OWNER WILL BE (Check One)

☐ Individual

☐ Partnership

☐ Corporation

This is not an application. It is a good faith statement that you wish to pursue licensure. A formal application will be provided by the child care licensing counselor assigned to provide technical assistance. When an accurately completed application is submitted to the Leon County Health Department, with the appropriate licensure fee and all required documentation, the Licensure Unit has 90 days in which to approve or deny your application.

I certify that I have read the above paragraph. All information is true and correct.

Date

Signature

OTHER MOTHERS, INC

March 3, 1996

Dear Child Care Licensing Unit:

Please consider this my letter of intent to apply for a child care license.

We are planning to open a child care center located at 29 River Road. Our plans are to be operational by early August. We have contacted the appropriate zoning board and have attached a copy of our certificate of occupancy from the board. Our Articles of Incorporation are attached with a list of the corporate members. The center will be on city water, city sewage and city electricity. Attached are copies of bills for each reflecting the center's address to be used as verification of each.

We hope to serve children with disabilities, as well as those without disabilities. We have contacted the ADA for their criteria. This information "I be shared with your department as soon as we have concluded our discussions with the ADA and know what their expectations and rules will be. We plan to open our center to ages 6 weeks to 12 years, serving children before and after school. Our operational hours are tentatively set from 6:00 A.M. until 6:00 P.M., Monday through Friday. We would like to offer day slots on a regular basis and on an occasional basis. We would also like to offer drop-in services for the parents who need to run errands, have doctors appointments, etc., for less than a four hour period of time on a sporadic basis. We plan to have beepers available for the drop-in care of less than 4 hours and have forms attesting to the child's immunizations and health available for parents to sign.

Our goal is to allow parents to drop their children off at the center on their way to work with the assurance that their children will be given a healthy breakfast and the school age children will be transported safely to school daily. We plan to pick these same children up after school. We will use our van to transport the children daily and will use the van during the other hours for short field trips for the remaining children. (Our van has not been purchased at this time, but verification of single liability insurance, an annual inspection by a mechanic, the physical exam for the van driver and a copy of the license for the driver will be submitted to your office prior to using the van at the child care center.) We will be providing two meals a day, plus two snacks a day, including breakfast and snacks for the after school children.

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We are also in the discussion stage with Kids, Incorporated regarding subsidized slots for at risk children.

If our square footage allows, we would like to serve at least 99 children. We are attaching a floor plan, drawn to scale, showing dimensions of each room. This plan also shows where each toilet and sink is located. We have labeled each room showing the classrooms, kitchen, office, isolation room, diaper changing area and the outside play area for your calculation of square footage in determining capacity.

We plan to re-paint the entire center, inside and out, as we are not sure if the prior occupants used lead-free paint, Our paint, will be lead-free. We are replacing all the vinyl with anon-porous, easily cleaned floor. The carpet in the center was just replaced by the prior owner and is in excellent condition. The carpet is a smooth, easily cleaned type and we feel that it is appropriate for the heavy traffic of a child care center.

Under separate cover we are submitting our discipline policy, incorporating the statutory language found in the Florida Statutes and the Child Care Administrative code, our activity schedules for each age group, Including-after school children, background screening for the owner/operator, proof of completion of First Aid and Infant/toddler CPR, TB results on the owner/operator and CDA verification. Screening for each employee hired after this date will be submitted as hired.

Please inform me of anything I have overlooked and what mX next step should be.

Sincerely,

Jane Doe
Owner/Operator
Other Mothers, Inc.

Change of Ownership Procedures

The Department must receive an application 45 days prior to new ownership, pursuant to s.402.308(2), F. S.

Written notification should be received by the department prior to change of owner/operator. A letter of intent to sell from current owner and a letter of intent to purchase from prospective buyer (Letter of Intent sample attached) needs to be placed in file.

In conjunction with your letter of intent, you will need to submit floor plan pursuant to Leon County Code, Chapter 8. An application, with appropriate fees, for licensure may also be submitted with your floor plan.

Once your application has been received, inspectors from the Fire Department, Nutrition Unit, Nursing Unit, Licensure Unit and Sanitation Unit will begin their inspections. Prior to licensure, all rules of the current codes and statutes must be met.

In conjunction with the above, the prospective owner of the center will need to submit the following to our office:

1. Background screening on new owner(s)/director.
 2. New Schedule of Activities for new ownership.
 3. New discipline plan for new ownership.
 4. Articles of Incorporation
 5. Copy of lease/purchase agreement between buyer/seller.
 6. Proof that at least one person in center has current First Aid and CPR.
- (Note: a provisional license will be issued until new owner/director screening has been cleared.)

Facts about Change of Ownership

Florida Statutes 402.308 states that every child care facility shall reapply for and receive a license prior to the time a new owner assumes responsibility for the facility. The department shall grant or deny the reapplication for licensure within 45 days from the date upon which the child care facility reapplies..

Leon County Code, Chapter 8-49(9) states that on all new establishments and those to be extensively remodeled, a floor plan, drawn to scale, indicating exits, windows and essential equipment is to be submitted with the application to operator or expand the facility. The plans shall show the location of property, the legal description of property and the location of the buildings thereon. **A floor plan (including play yard) and a plot plan must be submitted with the application form for a change in ownership.**

Square Footage for change of ownership

(important- read this carefully)

402.305(6) Florida Statutes:

A child care facility that holds a valid license on October 1, 1992, must have a minimum of 20 square feet of usable indoor floor space for each child and a minimum of 45 square feet of usable outdoor play area for each child. A minimum play area shall be provided for 1/2 of the licensed capacity. This standard applies as long as the child care facility remains licensed at the site occupied on October 1, 1992.

A child care facility that does not hold a valid license on October 1, 1992, and seeks regulatory approval to operate as a child care facility must have a minimum of 35 square feet of usable floor space for each child and a minimum of 45 square feet of usable outdoor play area for each child.

Sample Letters of Intent for Change of Ownership

From current owner:

Dear Licensing Agency:

I intend to sell my child care center, (center name), to (prospective owner). Attached is a copy of our contract/agreement.

I understand that I will continue to be responsible for the child care center until the prospective owner has been licensed. I understand that my current license is not transferable from one place to another, nor from one person to another. My current license will be returned to your office to be voided as soon as the new owner has been issued a license.

Sincerely,

Current Owner

From Prospective owner

Dear Licensing Agency

I am planning to purchase (name of center) child care center. I am attaching a copy of our purchase agreement, a copy of the Articles of Incorporation, copies of the new schedule of activities for each age group, our new discipline plan, the floor plan, including play yard, drawn to scale, outlining each room and what each room will be used for.

I am making the following changes in the structure and have contacted the building department for appropriate permits. You will be forwarded a copy of the certificate of occupancy once we have complied with all their procedures. An application for licensure with fees will be sent to you when we send you the certificate of occupancy.

Or (Sample paragraph below).

We are not making any structural changes in our building.

We will be purchasing the existing child care van. Attached is a copy of our single liability insurance policy. / OR --- (We will not provide transportation) ==OR -- We will purchase a van in the near future and will provide you with proof of insurance upon purchase.

We will/will not be providing meals and understand that the food preparation area shall meet requirements of Florida Administrative Code, Chapter 10D-13.

Sincerely,

Prospective owner